

Lie Tests Weed Out Ablest in CIA Job Lists, Expert Says

By Frank Eleazer
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Has the Central Intelligence Agency's omnipresent lie detector finally turned on its master? A Stanford University intelligence expert said yesterday that it has.

Stefan T. Possony of Stanford's Hoover Institution said the use of the lie detector in preemployment clearance tests by the CIA and other intelligence agencies is tending to weed out the active, all-American, conscientious and virile types most urgently needed as spies.

Conversely, he said, over-reliance on the lie detector actually helps open the way for employment of homosexuals, drones and trained Communist agents.

Sex Is Emphasis Point

That is just the opposite of the way the CIA likes to think its lie detectors work. The Agency and some other intelligence forces use the lie detector routinely as a part of preemployment testing, as well as in many other situations, and one point of emphasis is usually sex.

In a study prepared for congressional investigators, Possony said the trouble is that the lie detector measures mainly emotional reactions like fear.

He said most virile young men with normal sex drives, reared in the tradition that sex life is a private matter, respond uneasily to bureaucratic questioning about their sex experience. This causes the lie detector to register doubt. In security cases, doubts tend to be resolved against the applicant.

"By contrast, the genuine

homosexuals, who lack even the rudiments of guilt feelings about their sex life and actually may be very proud of it, probably will pass the lie detector with flying colors," Possony said.

Says May Even Help

"The lie detector may even help them to clear themselves of 'unjustifiable' allegations."

Humdrum applicants with little or no sex drive (and no initiative either) likewise can pass the lie detector test with no sweat, Possony said. As for counterspies, he said Russian spy schools know all about the CIA's use of lie detectors in personnel screening and can be presumed to have no trouble at all training infiltrators to beat the machine.

The CIA declined comment on the charges. Other Government intelligence sources, conceding Possony's expertise in the intelligence field generally, questioned his particular qualifications on the use of the lie detector and said his conclusions are wrong. They said the lie detector test is merely one of many steps in clearing applicants for intelligence work.